



Utah In Pre-Pioneer Days

SQUATTER'S RIGHT

By Elizabeth Burningham

I wish that I could penetrate the mists
That shroud this piece of acre we call home—
Back in a blurred antiquity
What others claim it?
What man, or was it only beast,
Loved it for his own?
What fight was fought, what love won,
What child in lonely travail born
Upon this spot where now we calmly sit
And let the secret-storied dirt
Course through our fingers?
What human dust, long vanquished,
Has this ancient soil absorbed?
That little tree, there by its irrigation ditch,
Accepts it lightly, too.
The two of us, the tree and I, wisely and dully,
Think of our squatter's right,
As though it were a claim eternal.

In presenting a correct history of Utah, our aim is to go into every phase of Utah's history that will lend to a thorough knowledge of its founding. While most of our attention has been given to the pioneer period, yet the time leading up to the colonization by the Mormon Pioneers is interesting and filled with romantic history.

JOHN C. FREMONT

Among those to be considered as an important character in the west is John C. Fremont, possibly the first man to make a survey of the Great Salt Lake and other western valleys. It is said that the Mormon Pioneers depended upon his printed reports in making their plans to cross the plains and establish themselves in the Great Salt Lake valley. His first trip into the west was in the autumn of 1842-43, when he came here on what is known in history as the Wind River Mountain exploration. It was made under the direction and pay of the United States Government. With him were twenty men with the famous scouter, Kit Carson, as guide. Many call him the "Trail Maker" but he really followed the path that had been made by Ashley, Henry, Bridger and Carson, and others. ✓✓✓ But so many immigrants and pioneers followed the map of the paths which he drew, we must give to him the honor of being the man who mapped the trail. Congress published and distributed thousands of the trail maps, and they were the means of saving a great deal of time and sacrifice by the immigrant.

In 1813-44, Fremont's second expedition was organized by the government and is known as the "Great Salt Lake, the Columbia and Californian Expedition." With Fremont came Thomas Fitzpatrick, known as "Broken Hand" because his hand had been shattered by a gunshot. They were joined at Pueblo by Kit Carson, who acted as a guide for exploring parties of the west for a period of thirty years. His intimate acquaintance with Indian habits, and his knowledge of their language made Carson a valuable aid to Fremont in making the maps of western trails.

"When the party reached Pueblo, Kit Carson, who happened to be in that part of the country, was persuaded to join the expedition. From St. Vrain's Fort on the South Platte, Fremont pushed westward up the Cache la Poudre in Colorado to the Big Laramie in Wyoming, by way of Medicine Bow Range, on to the North Platte, and northwest to the Sweetwater and to South Pass. This route, from Fort St. Vrain (Colorado), into the Laramie plains was practically a new one. Others had been over it, but the Indians were hostile along its line and it was not used. It was over this path that Jacques La Ramie was traveling when he met his death. This trail surveyed by Fremont was a practical one, over which, in a few years, hundreds of immigrants made their way to the west. Later on, a stage line was established along this route.

"From South Pass, the expedition went by the way of Green River to the Bear River, and down that stream to Great Salt Lake, arriving in September, 1843. The day after Fremont arrived at the lake he took his rubber boat, and with Carson, Preuss and the Frenchman, set out to explore the lake."—*The Pathfinders*, by Herbard.

Fremont made a third expedition into the west in 1845-47 to complete the survey of the great Salt Lake and to extend his survey to the southwest, thus providing a better route to the Pacific. It was during this trip that he encountered the Mexican authorities, who had issued an act forbidding foreign colonization within her borders. Fremont went in person to General Castro, then governor of Mexico, and asked permission to explore the country. Following this, the explorers made a camp in the valley of San Jose, but the Mexicans demanded that the explorers move. Then Fremont and his men went into the Oregon country, but in a short time returned to California, as a message had been received that United States and Mexico were at war. Fremont and his men took active part in the war, Fremont acting as an officer under Robert Stockton. Later a dispute arose over who was in chief command. It is said that Fremont sided in with Stockton who was a navy man, and Kearny, the army officer, had him court-martialed. Fremont was compelled to leave the service in disgrace, thus ending his third expedition.

Later, Fremont made two other major expeditions into the west. These were private ventures. It has been proven that the railroads connecting the eastern with the western part of United States followed the Fremont survey. Immigrants, goldseekers, homesteaders in the west, all followed his trails. He was not the first to enter the valleys, but the first to map the way.

It took daring adventurers to cross the rugged mountains, the treacherous streams, to meet the hostile Indian, and to stand the harsh weather of the great unknown west, but such were these men who marked the way for settlement of the western empire.

FUR TRAPPERS AND TRADERS

The arrival in Utah of Arze, in 1813, is recorded in a document in the Spanish Archives of New Mexico. We learn of his trading expedition, which brought him into Utah valley, or "the lake of the Timpanogos," in the year 1813. Although five members of the party gave sworn affidavits of what had taken place on the trip, none give in detail the route followed, but they left Ablquin March, 1813, and returned four months later. While here they traded with different groups of Indians, and finally were lead by a Yuta to a tribe of Bearded Indians. After their arrival in the camp, they overheard the Indians planning to kill them. Quickly the Spanish traders made their escape and soon after, returned to their homes and made a report.

The Missouri Fur Company was organized in 1807, with Manuel Lisa, as head and William Clark as receiver in St. Louis. They hired trappers and established a camp at the mouth of Big Horn River. The trappers went out into the wilds to trap the animals and make friends with the Indians with a desire to get the pelts the Indians had secured. In return for such furs, the Indians received trinkets of beads, knives, flashy pieces of cloth, tobacco, and sometimes firearms and poor whiskey. Later the government at Washington spent a good deal of money to stop this practice. With Lisa must be mentioned Andrew Henry, Wilson Price Hunt and George Drewyer.

WILLIAM ASHLEY

In the year 1822, William Ashley and Major Andrew Henry organized a fur company under the name of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Among the men associated with him were Jedediah S. Smith, William Sublette, Milton Sublette, David E. Jackson, Robert Campbell, James Bridger, Thomas Fitzpatrick and Etienne Provot. Ashley was a native of Virginia, but had lived near the frontier for twenty years, hence was well prepared to take his place as head of such trapping expeditions as he was called upon to make. During the winter they made camp at Ashley-Henry Fort at the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. In the spring, Ashley started for the Blackfeet country. Here the Indians drove the trappers back into the Yellowstone. The Arikars Indians killed one of the trappers and injured several others. So serious were their encounters with the Indians that Ashley called for volunteers to take word to Henry and ask for help. The one who responded was Jedediah Smith, the boy of the party who volunteered to take the message. He was successful in reaching Henry, who, with eighty men, including Smith, Bridger, Provot, Jackson and Sublette, came to his rescue. Soon after this, Ashley sent Provot south with a small party of trappers, and they camped on Utah soil.

✓✓✓✓✓ In Utah we find a pretty river, a picturesque canyon and a thriving city, all named after this old partisan of Ashleys, though the name has been shortened to Provo. It was Provot and his party that found the good trapping grounds in the region of the Great Salt Lake. It was Jim Bridger who found the great lake in the winter of 1824. It was Jedediah Smith in 1827 who first crossed the Sierra Nevada Mountains separating California from the east. Ashley established a post on Utah Lake near the site of the present City of Provo in 1825, and the next year took out a small cannon to be mounted there, the first wheeled vehicle to cross the South Pass. The two wheels of this engine of war made the first dim traces of the Oregon trail, that wonderful road that was to lead the peaceful conquest of the vast region known as the Oregon Country. Great store of beaver were found on the Bear River, Green River, Provo River, Weber River, and Utah Lake, and Ashley became a rich man, potent in the politics of Missouri. His bands led by such partisans as Provot, Bridger, Smith, Jackson, the two Sublettes, and Fitzpatrick, penetrated into every nook of this unknown land, trapped on every stream and lake, found every fertile valley and mountain pass. Ashley himself was the first white man to navigate Green Gulf of Mexico, but which came to be known as a branch of the Colorado, emptying into the Gulf of California. Down Green River Ashley went, as far as the mouth of the stream now bearing his name. Forty years after this a United States geological survey, on its entrance into the Red Canyon, found inscribed on a high rock, 'Ashley, 1825.'

MILES GOODYEAR

✓ We read the history of early Utah and find that most of the missionaries, trappers, immigrants, only used the Utah trail for short periods, but when we come to the life and accomplishments of Miles Goodyear, we find a man who desired to build a permanent home in the west. To him goes the honor of building the first home, planting the first garden, and building corrals for his cattle and horses. Historians claim he received a grant from the Mexican government for the land west of the Wasatch Mountains from Weber Canyon to the Utah Hot Springs on the north, then west to the shores of Great Salt Lake. It will be remembered that Goodyear was living on his property in Ogden when the Mormon pioneers arrived and sold the property to James Brown who received a deed for it.

Miles Goodyear was a Connecticut Yankee, born in 1817. At an early age he was bound out to a farmer who was to send him to school for a certain period each year. He was never satisfied with this life and when fifteen years of age, decided to go west and seek his fortune.

We first read of him as a member of the Dr. Marcus Whitman group, pushing a cart across the plains to pay for his share of the trip expenses. When he reached Fort Hall he told Whitman he was tired of caring for the cart, so he joined the Hudson Bay Fur trappers. Living among the western scouts, partaking of their adventures, he soon became a splendid frontier man, and traveled continuously in the west until about 1842 or 43, when he settled upon the Weber River.

✓✓ Here he planted the fertile soil and raised some crops to support his Indian wife and two known children. After selling his land and home to Captain Brown, Goodyear joined a brother and went to California where he bought horses and drove them east to sell to the United States Army. Afterward we read of Goodyear acting as guide for gold seekers bound for the Yuba River. Here he contracted a fever and died in November, 1849. His brother returned to Utah in the sixties for the two children, whom he educated. His Indian wife is supposed to have rejoined her tribe.

OTHER TRAPPERS

✓✓ John Colter was a member of the famous Lewis and Clark Expedition and on the homeward journey decided to retrace his steps and return to the wilderness. He met Lisa and his associates and became a member of their party. Late in the fall of 1808, Colter rode away from a hunt and visited several Indian villages. While at a Crow village the Blackfeet Indians swept down upon them and in the battle Colter was injured. After his wounds were healed he struck out alone and finally found himself in Yellowstone Park. Three weeks later he returned to Lisa's camp and told the story of the fountains of boiling water, or as he called it, "the place where hell bubbled up." His story was regarded as a myth, so Lisa did not make further exploration. Not long ago a stone was unearthed bearing his name and the date, 1808.

✓ Nathaniel J. Wyeth, founder of Fort Hall, was a native of Massachusetts born in 1802. At an early age he read of the explorations in the west, and in 1832, organized a company for the purpose of exploring the new country. He had with him twenty-four men when he joined the Sublettes company at Pierre's Hole. He has given to us some figures of the enormous fortunes made by the trappers, estimating that the skins brought 400% above the first cost. A successful trapper would take 125 beaver skins valued at the eastern markets at about \$1,000 besides the skins of all other animals. Of course most of the trappers were working for a company, who received the profits. Trading equipment was high and there were many sources of losses. It seems that no bargain was ever made without liquor and through its influence, the season's hard earnings were oftentimes lost in gambling, drinking parties, etc.

✓ Captain Benjamin Bonneville was an officer of the United States Army and received a leave of absence to explore the west. He crossed the plains in 1832 and spent three years in the west making maps, writing notes of his adventures as a trapper and trader. Later he returned to the Army and tried to get them to publish his story. This the Army officers refused to do, so he started to rewrite his report, hoping to publish it himself. A short time afterwards he formed an acquaintance of Washington Irving, who bought the manuscript for \$1,000 and published the western story, "The Adventures of Captain Bonneville."

✓ The old log cabin or home of Jim Baker has been preserved in Frontier park at Cheyenne, Wyoming. He was in Utah several times before the advent of the Mormon Pioneers and in 1897 responded to the invitation sent him to attend the Pioneers' Jubilee by sending a letter telling of his experiences here:

"Your letter and blanks are at hand, but I have been in such poor state of health, that I never had the power or disposition to do anything at all. But I will now try to tell you what I can remember of the country. I first came into the Mountains in 1837 with the American Fur Company, but did not get into the Utah valley until 1841, when I came in from Montana with forty other men and seven Shoshone Indians. We came from Bear River from Weaver Fork, and from there went to Provo, which was all covered with sun flowers, from which the Indians used to get seeds and eat them with grasshoppers. They were perty (sic) poor Indians. They were Utes but talked Shoshone, and when the Shoshones or the Utes went to war they would not kill these Indians.

"At this time we were on our way to Arizona to hunt Beaver, but while camped at Provo, we had a little racket with the Indians, which nearly ended in a fight with them, all on account of a gun. We came back from Arizona the next spring, '42, and saw the same Indians when again camped on the Provo. They saw us and thought we were going to pitch into them and they ran off. Old Peg Leg Smith was in charge of our party and we went by way of Henry's Fork and then to the Wind River Country. The next time I went there was with Miles Goodyear as pardner (sic) in the Indian trade in 1847. The Mormons came into the country the same summer, along in July. Miles Goodyear sold his things, horses, cattle, and grant to Captain Brown. We had our headquarters on Weaver's Fork. In 1848 when I and Miles divided up on the Sevier, Miles and Andy Goodyear went to California and I went through by Salt Lake City and Weaver's Fork to Fort Bridger.

"After this, a petition was sent up by the Mormons to Fort Bridger to get signers for a delegate to be sent to Washington. The man's name was, I think, Babbitt. This petition was signed by about eighteen or twenty Mountaineers, and old Lewis Vasques signed his name as did also Lewis Vasques, Jr. I also signed my name and some of the French boys also signed the petition. There were eighteen or twenty of us. It was admitted Territory but named Utah. In the year 1848, I think, Joshua Terry came up and went to work for James Bridger and Vasques, and worked for a couple of years when he quit, and then Joshua and I went trading around with the Indians for about five years and I got perty (sic) well acquainted with Joshua. Then he went down to Salt Lake City. He and I were chums, as you can see, for a long while; I have seen him occasionally since then.

"I am sorry I can not attend your celebration as I would probably renew a great many acquaintances of old time Gone by."

Osborne Russell came west with the Wveth party and helped to establish Fort Hall in 1834. A year later a party under Russell's direction journeyed south and did extensive explorations in the valleys of Utah. From an entry in his Journal we quote:

"March 25, I started in company with Alfred Shutes, my old comrade from Vermont to go to the Salt Lake and pass the spring hunting water-fowl, eggs, and beaver. We left the fort and traveled

in a southerly direction to the mountains, about thirty miles. The next day we traveled south about fifteen miles through a low defile and the day following we crossed the divide and fell onto a stream called Malad, or Sick River, which empties into Bear River about ten miles from the mouth. This stream takes its name from the Beaver which inhabit it, living on poison roots. Those who eat their meat become sick at the stomach in a few hours and the whole system is filled with cramps and severe pains, but I have never heard of a person dying with the disease. We arrived at the mouth of Bear River on the 2nd of April. Here we found the ground dry, the grass green and myriads of swans, geese, brants, ducks, which kept a continual hum day and night, assisted by uncouth notes of the sandhill cranes. The geese, ducks and swans are very fat at this season of the year. We caught some few beaver and feasted on fowls and eggs until the 20th of May when we returned to the Fort."

William Wolfskill set out from Taos and came over the old Spanish trail through Utah, in 1830. In a detailed report of the journey many interesting descriptions of the Utah Indians are given. They visited in Sanpete, Sevier and Washington Counties.

Another fur trapper and explorer of western fame is James O. Pattie. He led a party on foot up the Colorado River from the Gila to the headwaters of the South Platte River in the year 1826.

James P. Beckworth, Jedediah Smith, Robert Campbell, James Clyman, Moses Harris and many other trappers and explorers visited the Rocky Mountain Region and helped to build the history of the west by leaving letters, journals, and narratives of their trips.

About 1832, Antoine Robidoux established probably the first year-long trading post near the present White Rocks in Uintah County, Utah. It is sometimes called after its founder but more often "Fort Uintah." Enough history has been saved of this fort to know that it was quite an important trading post.

A few years later a trading post was established in Daggett County by Kit Carson and several other trappers. It was called the Fort Davy Crockett and for many years used as a protected trading place and a winter shelter for trappers, immigrants and explorers.

JAMES BRIDGER

The information in the following story of James Bridger was taken from his biography written by J. Cecil Alter.

James Bridger was born in Richmond, Virginia, March 17, 1804, the son of James and Chloe Bridger. His father was a hotel keeper in Richmond, and also owned a large farm near Richmond. In 1812, the family moved to St. Louis, at that time a small trading market.

In 1816, the mother died and within the next year the father and oldest son passed away, leaving the two children to face the future alone. Young Bridger, fourteen years of age, was allowed to take charge of a ferry boat, plying between the Bridger farm landing at Six Mile Prairie and the St. Louis Wharves. With the changing of fortunes of the farm,

the young man became apprenticed to Phil Creamer, a St. Louis Blacksmith. For nearly five years he worked around the forge, but was always alert to hear the stories of the western traveler.

On April 15, 1822, as a result of a newspaper advertisement for men to go west, he joined the company of Ashley and Henry. Thus the eighteen-year-old boy started a career that made him one of the foremost frontiersmen of the early west. He was six feet tall and spare, with keen, gray eyes, and brown hair which was very abundant. "His habitual expression was mild and his manner kind and agreeable." He was married three or four times. The first wife, according to his daughter, was a Mormon girl. The other wives were Indian women. He had six or seven children. One of them, Mary Ann, was taken captive in Waulatpu Mission massacre in Oregon late in the year of '47 and never heard of again.

His experiences as Indian fighter, trapper, scout, guide and discoverer led him into many adventures and experiences, all of which enriched his life and although he was illiterate (not being able to write his name) he could not be called an uneducated man. He met his experiences so courageously and intelligently that they developed in him a strength of character. He became a noted man. His knowledge of rivers, lakes, mountains and the products and resources of the different sections of the great basin was prodigious as shown by some of the Mormon pioneers. The leaders consulted Bridger of the feasibility of settling in the Great Basin and he rather discouraged them because of early frost in the valley. He was a skilled guide, frontiersman, and a gracious and entertaining companion.

James Bridger built the famous Fort Bridger in 1843, for the convenience of the immigrants of the trail. This was the first immigrant Fort west of the Mississippi.

He died July 17, 1881, at his farm home in Kansas City, Missouri, which property he had bought in 1850. His two sons, William and Felix, were buried beside him. In Mt. Washington Cemetery in Kansas City, Missouri, is a monument erected by Major General G. M. Dodge as a tribute to James Bridger's work as a Pioneer. It was unveiled Dec. 11, 1904, and bears this inscription:

1804—James Bridger—1881

Celebrated as a hunter, trapper, fur trader and guide. Discovered Great Salt Lake, 1824, the South Pass, 1827. Visited Yellowstone Lake and geysers, 1830. Founded Fort Bridger, 1843. Opened Overland Route by Bridger's Pass to Great Salt Lake. Was a guide for U. S. exploring expeditions, Albert Sidney Johnston's Army in 1857, and G. M. Dodge in U. S. Surveys and Indian Campaigns, 1865-66.

In the dome of the Montana State Capitol a large figure is painted of Bridger, its title being "The Trapper." His likeness also adorns the Colorado State Capitol. Four markers have been placed in Utah honoring the famous scout.

THE RENDEZVOUS

The most picturesque event in the lives of the fur-men was the "rendezvous" held annually in some favored spot, such as Pierre's hole (now Teton basin, Idaho), Ogden's hole, where Ogden, Utah, now stands, or the valley of the Green river, Wyoming. Every trapper knew where the rendezvous would be held, and about the first of July each year they began to gather. Here would come gaily attired gentlemen from the mountains of the south, with a dash of the Mexican about them, their bridles heavy with silver, their hat brims rakishly pinned up with gold nuggets, and with Kit Carson or Dick Wooton in the lead. In strong contrast would appear Jim Bridger and his band, careless of personal appearance, despising foppery, burnt and seamed by the sun and wind of the western deserts, powdered with fine white alkali dust, fully conscious that clothes mean nothing, and that man to man they could measure up with the best of the mountain men. At this gathering you would find excitable Frenchmen looking for guidance to Provot, the two Sublettes, and Fontennelle; the thoroughbred American, Kentuckian in type, with his long, heavy rifle, his six feet of bone and muscle, and his keen, determined, alert vigilance; the canny Scot, typified by Robert Campbell, who won both health and fortune in the mountains; the jolly Irishman, best represented by Fitzpatrick, the man with the broken hand who knew more about the mountains than any other man except, possibly, Bridger; and mixed in the motley crowd an alloy of Indians—Snakes, Bannocks, Flatheads, Crows, Utes—come to trade furs for powder, lead, guns, knives, hatchets, fancy cloth, and most coveted of all, whiskey, that made the meanest Redskin feel like the greatest chief.

Fur trading was the prime purpose of these gatherings. Great loads of goods were brought from St. Louis, at first on pack animals, but after Captain Bonneville's time, by wagons; and these were traded to the Indians and the free trappers for furs. The organized bands working for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company received their outfits for the coming year, and their wages for the past year, turned in their catch, and departed again for the beaver haunts. In a few days all were scattered and nothing remained to mark the location of the rendezvous save the charred remains of camp fires, well gnawed bones, some empty boxes, many empty bottles, and generally, a few fresh graves to testify to the maddening potency of the fluid those innocent bottles had held. In 1826, Ashley sold his interest in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and William Sublette.—*Path Breakers From River To Ocean.*

EARLY IMMIGRANTS

Among the first immigrants to cross the Salt Lake valley was Edwin Bryant and Russell H. Williams. They followed the Fremont Trail and record and that on July 31, 1846, they reached the Utah outlet of the Great Salt Lake-Jordan River. Describing their journey across the Great Salt Lake, we quote:

"Descending the precipitous elevation, we entered upon the hard, smooth plain, composed of bluish clay, encrusted with a white, saline substance. Beyond this we crossed what appeared to have

been the beds of several small lakes, the waters of which have evaporated, thickly encrusted with salt. About eleven o'clock we struck a vast white plain, uniformly level, snow white surface. For fifteen miles the surface of the plain is so compact that the feet of our animals left but little impression for the guidance of the future traveler. It is covered with a hard crust of saline and alkaline substance combined, from one-fourth to one inch in thickness, beneath which is a stratum of damp whitish sand and clay."—Edwin Bryant's *Story of the Trail*.

This is one of the many immigrants' descriptions of the now famous Salt Flats in Western Utah. The above group succeeded in crossing the mountains and arrived in California in the early fall of 1846.

One of the first immigrant wagon trains was known as the Harlan Band. History tells us that on May 1, 1846, about five hundred wagons formed an organized party and started across the plains with California as their destination. They followed the trail along the Platte River, to Independence Rock, then to Fort Bridger. Here the group separated, part taking Fort Hall route, others went into Echo Canyon where they encountered grave difficulties in crossing the mountains, then into the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Here a camp was established on the banks of the Jordan River, where they rested and made the necessary repairs to continue their journey. John Hargrave, one of their leaders went into the mountains to secure needed material and after a strenuous day, returned afflicted with a severe cold, which developed into pneumonia. Thus, traveling was delayed. He was not able to withstand the severe cold and passed away in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

"His grave was made on a knoll near the river Jordan, and no one ever had a more sincere band of mourners to lay him away. His last resting place was a bower of flowers placed by loving hands and every flower and particle of earth which formed his covering was wet with tears of the mourners. A prayer was said and a hymn sung, and his sympathetic friends left him to the quiet of the desert until he shall be awakened on the resurrection morn."—Edwin Bryant's *Story of the Trail*.

The route followed by these pioneers was on the south side of Salt Lake, then across the Salt Flats to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, by way of Donner Pass, then on to California. As Lansford Hastings had mapped out the trail it was and is known as Hastings Cutoff. Mention is made of three Harlan brothers, Peter L. Wimmer, John Spense, two Van Gordon brothers, and Samuel C. Young, as leaders of the group. Hastings acted as guide for the group, but acting on hasty decisions, he would change his plans and oftentimes led the immigrants over impassable roads. History records that Hastings was anxious to build the population of California and to be the leader or president of an empire which he hoped to establish there. In 1842 he led a party over the old trail, and afterwards returned to the East and prepared a guide book for Western immigrants, then, hoping to hasten immigration, wrote of the inexhaustible resources of California, and recommended to all Western bound groups the new route over the Salt Flats.

With such a man acting as guide, the Harlan party started to cross the desert after camping near the present town of Grantsville. The distance proved to be longer than they had anticipated, and failing to find water, the immigrants became desperate. They were crazy with thirst, and desperate as they watched their oxen drop by the wayside and their wagons sink into the salty trail. But on they went, as best they could, and finally reached Pilot Peak. Here they secured water and after a short rest, returned to the desert in an effort to save some of the stock and bring in their wagons. They finally reached their destination.

THE DONNER PARTY

Just a few days travel behind the Harlan immigrants came the Donner party under the leadership of James Reed and George Donner. They were traveling in heavy wagons and were well supplied with cattle. Lacking a trained guide they were delayed by road-making, cutting their trail through the mountains and by the loss of animals. So scouts were sent ahead to find Hastings to guide them on their way. When the scouts reached the valley of the Oquirrh, they overtook Hastings but he refused to leave his party, but went with Reed to a high mountain and pointed out the route over the desert. Reed returned to his people whom he found discouraged and tired. Cutting the timber, climbing over untrod trails, crossing mountain streams, had made the journey so hard that they had only made forty miles in thirty days. It was September 3 before they left the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Just a few miles out, Mr. Reed broke the axle of his wagon, and while waiting for it to be repaired, a Mr. Halloran died of consumption in the wagon of George Donner. So another day was taken to bury the body of their friend in a bed of pure salt.

About this time, an inventory was taken of the food supply, and they found they did not have enough to take them to California, so volunteers were called to go to Fort Sutter and get supplies and return and meet the train. A Mr. Stanton and Mr. McCutcheon responded. On the morning of the seventh they resumed their journey and after a hard day's journey they encamped on a large meadow, where they found another note from Hastings telling them of the conditions of travel and advising that they come well prepared to take a hard two days and nights trip without any stops for water. So they tarried in the grassy meadow long enough to get hay to carry them across the salty desert. It is impossible to describe the anguish of these people in making the trip across the Salt Flats. They lost thirty-six of their working animals, and some of their best wagons loaded with provisions were left buried in the plains. After two days hard travel, Mr. Reed volunteered to go ahead and seek water but was unable to find any until he reached Pilot Peak, thirty miles ahead. Returning, he met the party twenty miles away from the water. His own wagon was mired in the salty mud, but carrying his child, he and his wife set out for Pilot Peak. Jacob Donner, in the meantime, had reached the water supply and started back with water when he met the Reed family, who, exhausted, had resigned themselves to a terrible death on the salty desert. The entire party survived the desert crossing, but they had suffered from thirst, the morale of the

party was broken and discouragement had entered their ranks. The delay had caused them to reach the Sierra Nevada mountains too late to cross before a hard winter set in. The party was trapped in the mountain storms, and many of the party died before help came from Sutters Fort. They cooked and ate their harnesses, boots, and any leather they could find and drank the water these were boiled in.

History records the story of how they were compelled to eat the bodies of their dead. The original party consisted of eighty-one emigrants, but only forty-five reached California. Hastings was severely blamed for pointing out the trail made through the Salt Flats of Utah, which resulted in such tragedy. George Donner and James Frazier Reed, the leaders of the ill-fated party, were well-to-do men. They started with plenty of provisions, splendid cattle and horses, and had they followed the Fort Hall trail, would have reached their destination before winter set in and the courage of pioneering would have made of the group successful colonizers. As it was, when they reached the mountains, the unity of their organization was broken, fear entered their hearts and with nerves on edge they were ready for meager excuses to disagree. It is said that Mr. Reed and a fellow traveler had a disagreement, resulting in Reed being banished from the camp and making his way alone to California, where he was finally united with his family. Mr. C. F. McGlashan includes the following story of the Donner party in his book, *History of the Donner Party*:

"December 25, 1846, began to snow yesterday, snowed all night, and snows yet rapidly, extremely difficult to find wood; uttered our prayers to God this Christmas morning; the prospect is appalling, but we trust in him."—(From Breen's Diary.)

"What a desolate Christmas morning this was for the snow-bound victims! All were starving. Something to eat, something to satisfy the terrible cravings of the appetite, was the constant wish of all. Sometimes the wishes were expressed aloud, but more frequently a gloomy silence prevailed. When anything was audibly wished for, it was invariably something whose size was proportional to their hunger. They never wished for a meal, or a mouthful, but for a barrel full, a wagon load, a house full, or a storehouse full.

"On Christmas eve, the children spoke in low, subdued tones, of the visits Santa Claus used to make them in their beautiful homes before they started across the plains. Now they know that no Santa Claus could find them in the pathless depths of snow.

"One family, the Reeds, were in a peculiarly distressing situation. They knew not whether their father was living or dead. No tidings had reached them since his letters ceased to be found by the wayside. The meat they had they obtained from the Breen and Graves families and was now gone, and on the Christmas morning their breakfast was a 'pot of glue,' as the boiled rawhide was termed. But Mrs. Reed, the dear, tender-hearted mother, had a surprise in store for her children this day. When the last ox had been purchased, Mrs. Reed had placed the frozen meat in one corner of the cabin, so that pieces could be chipped off with a knife or a hatchet. The tripe, however, she had cleaned carefully and hung on the out-

side of the cabin, on the end of a log close to the ground. She knew that the snow would soon conceal this from view. She also laid away, secretly, one teacupful of white beans, about that quantity of rice, the same measure of dried apples, and a piece of bacon two inches square. She knew that if Christmas found them alive, they would be in a terribly destitute condition. She therefore planned to lay these morsels away, and give them to her starving children for a Christmas dinner. This was done. The joy and gladness of the poor little children knew no bounds when they saw the treasures unearthed and cooking on the fire. They were, just this one meal, to have all they could eat! They laughed, and danced, and cried by turns. They eagerly watched the dinner as it boiled. The pork and tripe had been cut in dice-like pieces. Occasionally one of these pieces would boil up to the surface of the water for an instant, then a bean would take a peep at them from the boiling kettle, and then a piece of apple, or a grain of rice. The appearance of each tiny bit was hailed by the children with shouts of glee. The mother, whose eyes were brimming with tears, watched her famished darlings with emotions that can be imagined. It seemed too sad that innocent children should be brought to such destitution that the very sight of food should so affect them. When the dinner was prepared, the mother's constant injunction was, 'Children, eat slowly, there is plenty for all.' When they thought of the starvation of tomorrow, they could not repress a shade of sadness, and when the name of 'papa' was mentioned, all burst into tears. Dear, brave 'papa'! Was he struggling to relieve his starving family or lying stark and dead 'neath the snows of the Sierra? This question was uppermost in the mother's mind."—Taken from the *History of the Donner Party*, by C. F. McGlashan, Truckee, Cal., 1879, 14th Ed.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN THE WEST

As early as 1539, the Catholic missionary had begun his work among the Indians of the West, for at that time, Fray Marcos did missionary work in what is now known as New Mexico and Arizona. Like all missionaries of his time his life was one of noble sacrifice and hardships. Before the time of our pilgrim fathers, many Christian churches had been established on the western part of United States and even today, ruins can be found that mark the establishment of Christianity in the West. Fray Garcia De San Francisco in 1662 built a church on the boundary line between U. S. and Mexico, and devoted his life to spreading the word of God among the Indians as well as advancing modern methods of agriculture. Then came the establishment of missions in California.

Lewis and Clark with their group of white men, had brought to the Indians along the trail a desire to learn more of the white man's ways. Especially among the Flatheads was the white man talked about, so much indeed, that he was thought to be divine, because some member of the Lewis and Clark expedition had carried a book that told about how to reach the happy hunting ground.

"It seems that the Flatheads finally decided to send for that wonderful book, for in the fall of 1831, four Flathead braves ap-

peared in St. Louis, saying they had journeyed on foot for many moons to reach the white man to beg for the book and for teachers who might show them how to use it. Captain Clark, the governor, who was then in charge of Indian affairs for all the region west of the Missouri, sent them to the various churches of the town. They were feted and made much of until one of the simple sons of the mountains succumbed that fall to the strain and was buried at the Catholic cathedral in St. Louis."—*The Missions* by Herbard.

Only one of the chiefs came back to his people, who, before returning made a strong appeal for missionaries to teach his people Christianity.

Jason and Daniel Lee, Methodist ministers, were the first to respond and in 1834, they opened a mission in Oregon. They accompanied Nathaniel Wyeth on his second trip West, and settled in Willamette valley, the home of many Indians and French Canadians who had married Indian wives. This mission might be called the beginning of American settlement in the Northwest.

Next, we find the Rev. Mr. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman, representing the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, attaching themselves to a party of fur traders, led by Fontenelle, to look over the Indian territory. We read of them at the Green River Rendezvous preaching to the trappers and Indians. Also at this time, Dr. Whitman removed the head of an arrow from the back of Jim Bridger. Bridger had been shot in the back three years before by a Blackfoot Indian. Whitman returned to St. Louis while Parker worked among the Indian tribes. Whitman returned in 1836, bringing his bride and Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Spaulding. They traveled with a party of trappers and finally reached the West where Mr. Spaulding chose Lapwai to make his home (east of Lewiston, Idaho), while the Whitmans established themselves near the present town of Walla Walla. These good missionaries and their wives tried to bring civilization to the Indians and to teach the best way of bringing forth crops.

"When Astoria was founded, ten potatoes were planted. These produced one hundred ninety. The next year the crop was five bushels, then fifty bushels. When Mr. Parker came in 1835, he brought with him a quart of wheat seed. This was even more prolific, for eleven years after its first planting it yielded a crop of twenty thousand and thirty bushels. This was the striking result of the lessons in agriculture given by Whitman and Spaulding."

—*The Missions* by Herbard.

Because the success of the missions in the West was not as great as was expected, the board of missions in the East decided to abandon them, so Whitman, anxious that they continue, decided to go to St. Louis and plead for them. He endured untold hardships, as he had started in October and continued on during extremely cold weather. Going to Washington and on to Boston, he finally received the consent of both the authorities to continue the missions, and in June, 1843, again left for his western home. He joined a company of colonists led by Captain Peter H. Burnett, who later became governor of California.

Dr. Whitman continued his services of aiding the white immigrant to choose a location for his home and kept alive the Christian spirit. Mrs. Whitman taught the schools, nursed the sick and tried to teach the mothers the rudiments of keeping a home. Following an epidemic of measles which were brought to the Indians by a white immigrant family, the Indians became angry because the good doctor could not cure all their children, and believing the renegade half-breeds that told them, "Dr. Whitman wanted them all to die so he could take their lands," the Whitmans and twelve other immigrants were massacred in November, 1847. The Spauldings received warning in time to escape to the Hudson Bay post. Here we learn of Peter Skene Ogden, the noted trapper, who was sent to quiet the Indians and to rescue the forty white people held by the Indians.

FATHER DE SMET

Utah's history is never told in words, pageantry or song, without paying tribute to Escalante and the Spanish Friars who in 1776 came into Utah valley and brought the first glimpse of Christianity to the Indians of that locality. We remember at that time he expressed a desire to return and establish a great Catholic mission among the Ute Indians. Honor has been shown him by naming many geographical places in Utah for him.

Not long ago a monument was erected to the memory of another great Catholic Priest, Father Pierre Jean De Smet. The monument is erected in Ogden, Utah, near the site he is thought to have traveled as he went north to Idaho where he performed his great missionary work. He was a native of Belgium, born there January 30, 1802. His first mission to the Indians was in 1838, and from then until 1846 he made several trips to the West.

In the fall of 1846, De Smet returned to St. Louis and at Winter Quarters met the advance guard of the Mormon Pioneers. As he had come from the West and had spent so much time there, Brigham Young invited the Father to visit with him. The Reverend M. James E. Kearney quotes the following from a letter written by Father De Smet in the year 1851:

"In the fall of 1846, as I drew near to the frontier of the State of Missouri, I found the advance guard of the Mormons numbering about ten thousand camped on the territory of the Omaha, not far from the old Council Bluffs. They had just been driven out for a second time from a state of the Union. They had resolved to winter for the second time on the threshold of the great desert and then to move onward into it, to put distance between themselves and their persecutors, without even knowing at that time the end of their long wanderings nor the place where they should once more erect for themselves permanent dwelling places.

"They asked me a thousand questions about the regions I had explored and the valley which I have just described (in a previous part of letter) pleased them greatly from the account I gave them of it. Was that what determined them to settle there I would not

dare assert it. There they are. In the last three years Utah has changed its aspect and from a desert has become a flourishing territory which will soon become one of the states of the Union."

As the Lee Brothers answered the call of the Flatheads for the Methodist church, Father De Smet was the one sent by the Catholics. Traveling over the Oregon Trail to the Green River Rendezvous, Father De Smet was met by ten warriors of the Flatheads who had been sent to meet him. At Pierre's Hole sixteen hundred Indians, representing many tribes, had gathered to greet the Catholic Father whom they called "Black Robe." He labored faithfully among the Blackfoot, Flathead and other tribes. Some were hostile to his cause. He was so interested in the Indians that in 1842 he went to Europe to obtain financial aid for them and upon his return brought four priests and a number of Sisters of Notre Dame whom he had converted to the Indian cause.

He was loved by the Indians of the West, and was the means of making peace between tribes that had long been enemies. Several times he was called by the authorities at Washington to help bring peace between warring tribes. As late as 1868, Father De Smet visited the West when he persuaded the Sioux, who were warring, to sign a treaty of peace. Until the very last of his days he remained a friend and lover of the Redmen and in return every one who came in contact with him loved him. He died May 28, 1873, at St. Louis. Of him Reverend Kearney said, "He loved the Lord God with his whole heart and soul, and he loved his neighbor as himself."

Friends Of The Pioneers

A number of years ago Judge Terrell, of Austin, Texas, U. S. minister to Turkey during Grover Cleveland's administration, came on to the Temple grounds, and asked the guide to permit him to speak to the party being conducted through the grounds.

Permission granted him, he said, "Ladies and Gentlemen; I was a youth of nineteen when your people left the city of Nauvoo. I stood on the banks of the river and saw them cross to what I believed to be certain death. A poorer, more bedraggled set of people I had never seen. They started with horses and cows hitched to the same wagon, and in some instances took their goods across the river in a wheelbarrow. What I witness on this block today is a veritable miracle to me."—*Relief Society Magazine*, 1921, page 58.

THOMAS L. KANE

Among the staunchest friends of the pioneers was Thomas L. Kane, a very distinguished gentleman from Philadelphia. Soon after the pioneers were driven from Nauvoo, Elder Jesse Little was sent by President Brigham Young to Washington for the purpose of securing aid for the exodus. No gift of money was expected but the Saints thought the government might hire them to do freighting into the far west. When he returned he brought with him General Stephen F. Kearney, of U. S. Army, and Thomas L. Kane. Colonel Kane was ill and so remained among the Saints for some time.

On March 25th, 1850, he appeared before the Historical Society of Philadelphia:

"Since the expulsion of the Mormons to the present date, I have been intimately conversant with the details of their history. But I shall invite your attention most particularly to the account of what happened to them during their first year in the wilderness; because at this time more than any other, being lost to public view, they were the subjects of fable and misconception. Happily it was during this period I myself moved with them; you are aware, my right to speak with authority of them and their character, their trials, achievements and intentions. . . .

"They began their march in mid-winter and by the beginning of February nearly all of them were on the road, many of the wagons have crossed the Mississippi on the ice. Under the most favorable circumstances, an expedition of this sort, undertaken at such a season of the year, could scarcely fail to be disastrous. But the pioneer company had set out in haste, and were imperfectly supplied with necessities. The cold was intense. . . .

"After days of fatigue, their nights were often passed in restless efforts to save themselves from freezing. Their stock of food, also,

